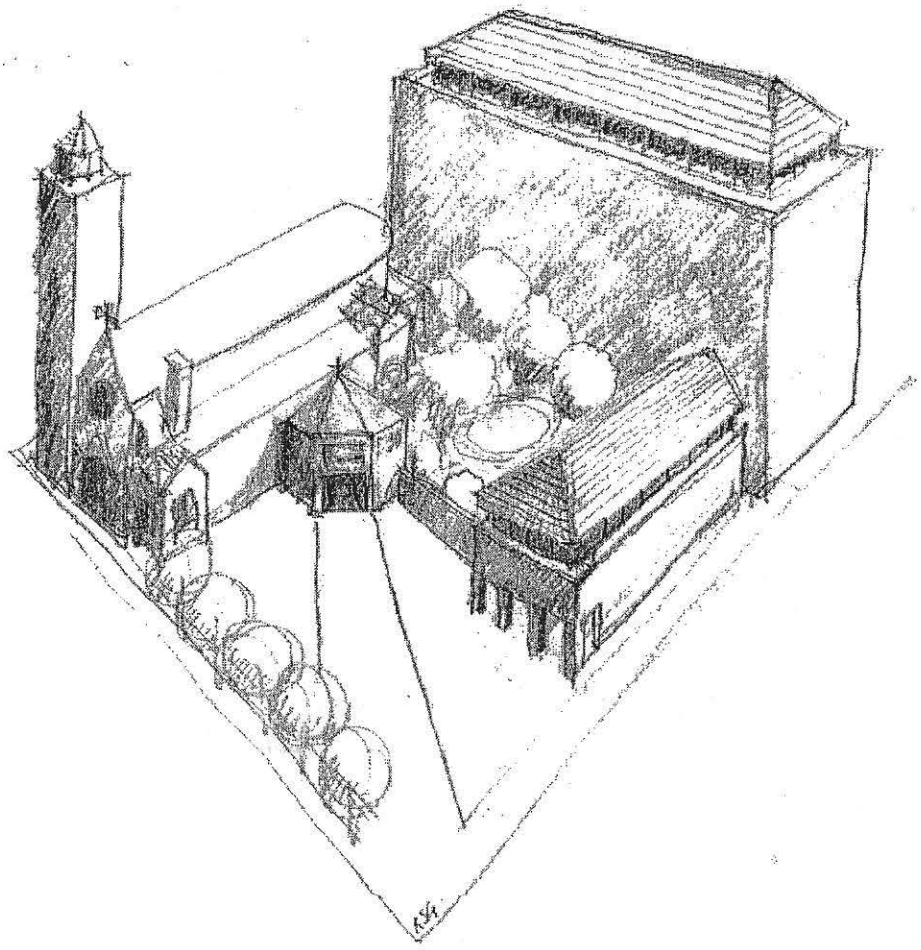
A NEW CATHEDRAL
FOR
PHILADELPHIA



A REPORT
OF THE CATHEDRAL CHAPTER
MAY 2001

— UPDATED JANUARY 2002 —

A NEW CATHEDRAL FOR PHILADELPHIA

In 1992, the former Church of the Saviour, in West Philadelphia, was designated the Cathedral Church of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. This paper sets out the proposals for the renovation and development of the Cathedral and its site.

Context

The cathedral complex consists of

1. the cathedral church fronting 38th Street, a brownstone building designed by Charles M. Burns Jr. in 1906 in an Italian Romanesque style, and listed in 1979 on the National Register of Historic Places.
2. two large brownstone houses fronting Chestnut Street, one housing the cathedral offices, and the other (the former rectory) housing at present the Christian Education Resource Center of the Diocese

3. the cathedral garden, occupying the corner site of 38th and Chestnut streets

The Cathedral is located in the heart of University City, the fastest-growing area of central Philadelphia, within the campus of the University of Pennsylvania, and adjoining the campus of Drexel University, the Science Center, and within walking distance of several major teaching hospitals. To the west lie the local, diverse neighborhoods of West Philadelphia.

History

In 1999, Canon Richard Giles was appointed Dean with a brief to oversee the renewal of the liturgical space of the Cathedral, and in 2000 George Yu was appointed cathedral architect.

In July 2000, a structural engineer's report initiated by the cathedral architect confirmed that the structure of the nave floor, which had long been giving cause for concern, was in fact inadequate for a place of public assembly and, following legal advice, the building was closed.

This enforced closure necessitated the re-scheduling of the Cathedral Project, in view of the need to re-open the cathedral as soon as possible. At the same time, (Winter 2000/2001), the opportunity arose for the Cathedral Chapter to submit a bid for the purchase of the adjoining apartment block, 3717 Chestnut Street, in order to enlarge the cathedral footprint.

The Cathedral Project

The Cathedral Project consists of two distinct phases:

PHASE ONE: CURRENT PROJECTS

PHASE TWO: FUTURE PROPOSALS

PHASE ONE: CURRENT PROJECTS

(A) : the Enlargement of the Cathedral Site
At its meeting on March 22, 2001, the Cathedral Chapter authorized final negotiations for the acquisition of the adjoining apartment block 3717 Chestnut Street, valued at $1.9m, which would

1. extend the boundary of the cathedral site eastwards, to abut the boundary of International House
2. provide an increased return on investment to offset the loss of cathedral income resulting from the use of endowment funds to undertake renovation works in Phase Two

The acquisition of the apartment block would be achieved by the taking out of a bank loan by the special corporation, 3717 Chestnut Corporation, set up by the Chapter for the purpose of acquisition.

The complexities of this transaction mean that the deal is not likely to be finalized until early 2002.[1]

Cost of Phase One (A): $2,122,775

(B): the Renovation of the Worship Space

At its meeting on November 16, 2000, the Cathedral Chapter approved the plans submitted by architect George Yu for the reinforcement of the cathedral floor and the renovation of the worship space. This includes the laying of a stone pavement throughout the interior, installation of air conditioning, a new lighting scheme, and two new restrooms at the west end..

The renovation of the worship space is seen as the means of creating a transformed and transforming space at the center of our diocesan life, which will model the baptismal covenant and facilitate creative worship of traditions old and new.

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[1] Due to the complexities of this transaction, and the limited funds to the Chapter at a time of renovation, this property was finally acquired by the Church Foundation in December 2001. In this acquisition the Trustees sought to make a sound investment which would safeguard the site's future development for the benefit of both cathedral and diocese in accordance with the planning framework contained in this Report.

Construction work begin in July 2001 for completion in May 2002.

Cost of Phase One (B): $2,626,515

(C) : the Renovation of the Undercroft

The undercroft has never provided facilities adequate for its purpose as a meeting place for the diocesan family, and has further deteriorated following investigative works to assess damage to the nave floor above.

Part of the undercroft will be required for mechanical equipment and ducting for the heating and cooling systems, but the greater part of the basement level will be available for conversion into a large meeting and exhibition hall with ancillary kitchen and restrooms. This refurbishment will need to be of the highest standard, both to sustain heavy prolonged use and to overcome the folk memory of an abysmal environment.

Phase Three will begin as soon as funds are available, with the intention of beginning at least part of the work before the completion of Phase One (B).

Estimated Cost of Phase One (C) : $1,000,000

PHASE TWO: FUTURE PROPOSALS

(A): the Co-ordination of Ancillary Facilities

The Cathedral Complex is at present a disjointed site consisting of three unrelated buildings with a number of separate entrances, resulting in a total lack of coordination between the various activities of the site; worship, arts, administration, education and community use.

Phase Four will bring together these various uses via a single point of entry and will secure the refurbishment of both existing buildings on Chestnut Street and of the garden. Construction work will include;

1. the construction of a new entrance block at the eastern end of the existing parking lot, to provide a unified entrance, approached from the corner of 38th and Chestnut, into all three buildings.
2. alterations to both Cathedral House and Gateson House to create a unified internal structure
3. the provision of access to all floors (including the cathedral nave and undercroft) by elevator
4. the redesign of the cathedral space as a significant civic space within Cathedral City with capacity for liturgical, arts, and recreational gathering

Phase Two (A) is scheduled to begin 2004

Cost of Phase Two (A): Not yet available

(B): the Construction of a new Cathedral Center

The final phase of the Cathedral Project will involve the demolition of 3717 Chestnut Street, and possibly of Cathedral House and Gateson House also, and the erection on the site of a new building of up to eight stories.
The new building would be built in partnership with one of the engines for growth in the neighborhood, such as the University Science Center, which has already expressed interest in a joint venture. In such a partnership, the Science Center would construct the building, and occupy the majority of the space, making available to the Cathedral (and perhaps to the Diocese) office space as required.
The new office accommodation would enjoy access direct from the piazza of International House, as well as from the rest of the cathedral complex.

On the site of Cathedral House and Gateson House, if demolished, a new three-story block would run at right angles to the eight story building, along the Chestnut Street frontage, to provide conference facilities, refectory and bookshop.

One of the new buildings would also include residential accommodation for the dean, assistant clergy, and sexton.

The space in the angle of the two new buildings, adjoining the southeast corner of the Cathedral, would be transformed into an enclosed cloister garden.

Phase Two (B) is scheduled to begin 2005.

Cost of Phase Two (B): To be negotiated

Summary:

Whereas the current projects have been the sole responsibility of the Cathedral Chapter, with funding provided from its own resources, the future plans will necessarily involve partnership with the Diocese and with other bodies and agencies to establish a cathedral precinct worthy of the fifth largest diocese in the United States and of our historic and foundational city.

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